(b) Approx. 1, 50, 000 Indian natio nals have been repatriated from Iraq and Kuwait. According to latest esti mates, there are still an estimated 12, 000 to 14, 000 Indian nationals in Kuwait who have opted to stay back. There are also another 4, 000 persons approx, in Iraq.

(c) Flights would be arranged on a need basis to bring them back to India. Under present prevailing conditions, transfer of properties including bank accounts is not possible.

Air pollution

736. SHRI SHAMIM HASHMI: Will th* Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Delhi's auto pollution is creating winter fog;

(b) whether there has been any decrease in overall air pollution during last three years and if so, detils thereof indicating the steps that have helped most; and

(c) what steps are proposed to meet the situation in Delhi and other cities in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Winter fog is a natural phenomenon caused by meteorological conditions. Emissions from vehicles however, contribute significantly to the pollution load in Delhi;

(b) There is a declining trend in the annual mean values of the ambient levels of suspended particulate matter in the last three years, primarily because the emissions from three thermal power plants in Delhi are now meeting the standards. The standards for vehicular emissions have come into effect frorn, March 1, 1990 in Delhi and are being enforced; and action is being taken by the Central Pollution Control Board to control emissions from major industrial units.

(c) Steps proposed to control air pollution in Delhi and other cities ar» as follows:

(i) Mass emission standards for vehicles have been notified and wilt come into effect from April, 1991 for petrol driven vehicles and April, 1992 for diesel driven vehicles.

(ii The petroleum industry hw been asked to reduce the lead content in petrol supplied *to* Delhi and bring it down to 0. 15 gramms per litre by April, 1993.

(iii) The Government has issued a notification on Dec. 6, 1990 that for vehicles manufactured after April 1, 1991 every manufacturer of motor vehicles shall submit the prototype of the vehicles to be manufactured for test by an agency specified by the Central Government for certification to th© compliance of the provisions of th» Motor Vehicles Rules, including vehicular emission standards.

Talks with U. S. Secretary of *State* about strain on Indian economycaused by Gulf crisis

737. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHAND-RAKANT BHANDARE:

SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the then Minister of External Affairs, during his visit to the US in connection with UN General Assembly meeting towards the end of September, 1990 informed the US Sect rtary of State about the extent of strain caused on Indian economy by the recent Gulf crisis;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what was the US Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) Ye$_s$ Sir.

(b) and (c) In the meetings with the US Secretary of State, the then Exter-